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ABSTRACT

This paper identifies key factors which promote participation of the poor (resident participation) through group action and community decision making processes, programs, and activities; and describes techniques which Community Action Program (CAP) grantees have used successfully to enhance such participation. Kinds of CAP grantee and community activities have included membership in community action agencies (CAAS) and other policy boards and committees, employment in public and private agencies, administration and operation of economic self-help and other programs, and individual exercise of rights and privileges as citizens. Guidelines presented here are based on resident participation in 22 urban and rural CAAs in January 1969, discussions with Office of Economic Opportunity regional personnel, and selected evaluative reports prepared under Federal contracts. Appendix A contains case studies of successful, locally initiated group action. (LY)

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CAP Mission Guide

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Participation of the Poor in the Community Decision-making Process

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PARTICIPATION OF THE POOR

IN THE

COMMUNITY DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

COMMUNITY DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

Distribution:
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Office of Economic Opportunity
Community Action Program
August 1969

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Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 as amended, Sections 201(a)(4) and 212(b)(4)

OEO Instruction 6005-1, "Participation of the Poor in the Planning, Conduct and Evaluation of Community Action Programs," December 1, 1968

OEO Instruction 7850-1, "Standards for Evaluating the Effectiveness of Community Action Programs," May 28,1969

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INTRODUCTION

This paper has two purposes: (1) to identify key factors which promote participation of the poor (resident participation) through group action in community decision-making processes, programs and activities; and (2) to describe techniques which CAP grantees have used successfully to enhance such participation.

The participation of low-income people in CAP grantee and community activities takes many forms, including: (1) membership on CAA and other agency policy boards and advisory committees; (2) employment in public and private agencies; (3) administration and operation of economic self-help and other programs; and (4) individual exercise of rights and privileges as citizens. These forms of participation are all important, and some will be the subject of future OEO guidance papers. This paper, however, deals exclusively with resident participation through group action.

This paper is based on an informal review and analysis of resident participation in twenty-two urban and rural CAAs in January 1969, discussions with OEO Regional Office personnel, and selected evaluation reports prepared by private firms under contract to OEO/CAP. It distills from CAA practices some common principles and techniques of resident participation and discusses how low-income people have taken part in group action. From this material, grantees may glean ideas which can be adapted to their needs. Appendix A contains case studies of locally initiated group action which has led to achievement of desired ends. These are simply examples of different approaches to problems taken by local groups. Their inclusion does not indicate OEO's preference for these or any other particular methods. Grantees may contact referenced CAAs for more detailed information.

AIM OF ORGANIZED PARTICIPATION

A hallmark of American democracy is the tradition of individuals forming organizations to protect and advance their common interests. This tradition of group activity has become an important part of our decision-making process, making it more responsive to citizens' needs. Thus, business and trade associations, labor unions, professional societies, civic associations, ethnic groups and other special interest groups have influenced public policy and helped shape political, economic and social decision-making processes. The Community Action Program builds on this tradition and extends it to include the poor, who have not fully participated in the past.

Poor people have a greater chance of being heard, influencing decisions and achieving aims if they, too, exercise their right to form and work through groups. Resident groups can have an impact on decisions made by local governments, school systems, public and private social service agencies, and physical and social planning agencies, to name a few. Requests made by groups have greater force than similar requests made by individuals. A group provides continuity even when individuals change, and has a structure community leadership can recognize and work with.

As resident groups gain experience in methods of constructive group action and participation in community affairs, and become part of the decision-making processes, their action may cause existing institutions and programs to become more sensitive and responsive to the needs of the poor. It can increase the human and financial resources devoted to problems of the poor. It can strengthen the social fabric of the community by encouraging the non-poor to understand, care about and help solve the special problems and needs of the poor.

CAP grantees have a responsibility to broaden the scope of opportunities within their own agencies and in the larger communities for participation of the poor, and to help the poor equip themselves to take advantage of these opportunities.

FACTORS AND METHODS WHICH FOSTER THE DEVELOPMENT OF RESIDENT GROUPS

The presence or absence of certain key factors may foster or impede success in developing effective resident groups. Some of these factors are: (1) motivation to participate; (2) information about community issues or decisions; (3) leadership; (4) a well-defined goal for action; (5) broadly based resident involvement; (6) a recognized resident group; and (7) support for the effort and participants. These factors are not listed in order of importance or in the order in which they necessarily will occur in a community.

CAAs have used many methods to encourage resident group activities. Rural CAAs will have to overcome special problems of working in sparsely settled areas in which distance, population dispersion, poor transportation and communications, and insufficient resources make meetings and group action difficult. The choice of techniques by both urban and rural CAAs will relate to the issue being considered, attitudes and conditions in the community and wishes of the residents involved. Rarely will all methods discussed here apply to a single group situation, but many may be relevant if adapted to local conditions.

1. Motivation

Motivating people to take part in community affairs is difficult in the best of circumstances. It is more difficult with poor people, because they have rarely had the chance to participate or may have been rebuffed in earlier efforts. As a result, they may be unused to acting in their own behalf, may have little experience in and knowledge of how to make their views known, or may have become apathetic because of their apparent inability to influence decisions.

However, CAAs have learned that people will act when issues vital to their well-being are concerned and when their involvement appears to offer a chance to solve problems.

Two conditions are important:

(1) The people whose well-being is at stake must themselves identify their concerns and interests. Issues cannot be imposed by others; they must arise from the awareness of the people involved of their own needs.

(2) There must be an early demonstration that the people participating will be able to make meaningful decisions and that their views will result in corrective action. It is nearly impossible to sustain interest if people have little say in developing or carrying out a project or if it does not have a reasonable chance of success.

Shared interests form the basis for group organization. These include: common concerns or problems; ethnic identity; age similarity; geographic proximity; and common work or living situations.

Issues of interest to low-income people are many. A particular problem may be relevant to a single group or to several. It may involve only one neighborhood or it may cut across neighborhoods and be of area-wide concern. Issues are wide-ranging--from jobs, to better services, to gaining a voice in planning and decision-making processes.

Both the urban and rural poor are concerned with having a part in the decision-making process of the local community, with increasing their income and with obtaining needed services. However, urban and rural problems do differ somewhat, and these differences are reflected in the specific focus and approaches of each group.

In rural areas, where basic services are often lacking, a resident group might concentrate first on getting services established and then on having them provided in mobile units to overcome population dispersion and poor transportation. In cities, where basic services are more common, poor people want them to be more accessible and responsive to their needs; an urban group might try to get services decentralized to neighborhoods and operating hours or eligibility requirements changed.

In rural areas, economic development programs are a major tool for organizing the poor, raising incomes and attracting services. Rural groups might form production and marketing cooperatives, set up farm machinery shops or start home-canning enterprises. These income-producing activities then may provide a base for advocating better roads, transportation and water supply systems. In cities, where the economic base is more viable, resident groups might focus on better training and more aggressive job placement and development programs.

CAAs must be sensitive to the many ways in which issues emerge and to ways to identify problems which need group action. CAA staff and VISTAs can go into target areas to learn what residents are saying. A low-income resident may explore his concerns with neighbors and seek common action with them.

--- In Bath, Maine, a group of AFDC mothers met to talk over problems in the operation of the town welfare system following discussions in the Head Start program and with a CAA community worker. From this beginning, welfare regulations were eventually changed.

--- Residents of a depressed area of Lee County, Virginia, decided at a neighborhood center meeting to try to get a rural mail route set up. They now receive mail at their homes.

--- In Huntsville, Alabama, a VISTA talked to domestics and found that low wages were an issue. After a training program was set up, wages went up considerably.

Often CAA-sponsored programs become vehicles for issue identification and group organization as problems are presented through neighborhood center and program advisory council. When this is the case, participants should be helped to build organizations which can ultimately become independent of the CAA and programs. However, resident groups need not be formed around or become part of the CAA's program; sometimes it is more advantageous if they retain an identity separate from the CAA. In this case, the CAA can still provide information, support and technical assistance.

2. Information About Community Issues or Decisions

Poor people are often excluded from participation in community affairs because they are unaware of current events or issues that affect them. Frequently they learn of decisions too late to be able to influence or change them.

Access to information about a problem, therefore, may be the factor prompting group organization and action. For example:

--- In East St. Louis, Illinois, residents learned that the city planned to rezone a residential area for industry and acted to protect their homes.

--- In another city, knowledge of HUD's citizen participation requirements for Model Cities grants sparked residents to take part in planning the program.

--- In Phoenix, Arizona, information that the city planned to develop and improve a large recreation area led the neighborhood

councils to suggest an alternate plan for "mini-parks" located in target areas, which was adopted.

The problem around which residents unite may be one raised by recent events or decisions in the community, or it may be one of long-standing concern to low-income residents. In the latter case, the timing of organization efforts to coincide with current developments can help mobilize residents.

--- In Richmond, Virginia, residents formed a group to get better bus service routed through target areas when the transit company requested approval for a fare increase.

--- A CAA community action council in San Diego, California, set up an organization of low-income residents seeking rent control after rents were raised.

CAAs are responsible for informing poor people early of matters concerning them so they may be heard before decisions are made. While CAA staff cannot personally reach all target residents, they can inform and explain issues to key low-income residents in each area and have them spread information to other residents; these "communicators" might be part-time employees of the CAA. At neighborhood centers and in program advisory councils, issues could be discussed, and poor people who understand the issues could act as discussion leaders.

A program designed to experiment with improved communications methods in rural areas has recently started in a large, non-contiguous five-county area in Southern Arizona. A series of thirty-minute public affairs programs will be developed and presented on local radio stations donating time. The programs will highlight action local CAAs are taking to overcome problems they face and will inform area poor about available public resources and programs and other topics of interest. A closed circuit TV effort will use a mobile TV unit which "orbits" the five counties, bringing to each locale video tapes on subjects of special interest.

Once resident groups form and determine goals, members may need to get additional specific information to enable the group to decide upon a course of action. While group participants will assume responsibility for obtaining such information, the CAA continues to be a source of and channel for information about community affairs and subjects for group action.

3. Leadership

The initiator of group organization or activity must be able to help participants identify goals and formulate plans of action. He must have or gain the confidence, recognition and support of the residents being mobilized. He may be a poor person, neighborhood worker, VISTA or other interested person from the community. However, once the group is formed and has achieved a sense of identity, the organizer should relinquish a dominant role so that target area members may assume leadership. He continues to serve the group in a supportive capacity, but the group should come to rely on him less and less as it becomes independent.

As participants assume responsibility for the group's activities, the process becomes an educational experience in leadership development and individual participation. Different persons may take on leadership roles as an activity unfolds, but leaders are essential in each stage of the process.

Although it might be desirable for leaders to be selected early, sometimes it is preferable to choose an interim leader until the group is assured of broad based participation and can identify members who are sympathetic to the group's aims and who can command the respect and support of other members. There is always a danger of any leader using a group for his own purposes. The leader must be committed to the group's goals, must hold himself accountable to the group, and must be willing and able to share responsibility with other members.

To ensure leadership accountability and group continuity regardless of participation by any single individual, leadership skills need to be developed among many members. Although one member may serve as group chairman, responsibilities for different aspects of the activity can be assigned to different members. By sharing and rotating responsibilities among members, the unique talents of each can contribute to the activity and more members can learn how to participate in group processes.

CAAs should be alert to ways to develop indigenous leadership. The Forrest City, Arkansas, CAA uses community improvement projects as a means to develop leadership. Two recently funded rural demonstration grants are experimenting with leadership development programs. One, in Anne Arundel County, Maryland, will use an educational-group dynamics specialist to develop and conduct citizen leadership seminars. Another, operating in Utah and Colorado, will

identify and hire on a part time basis low-income local leaders and work with them to develop the capacities of their communities for self-help efforts. A staff of nine developers will work intensively with communities until local leadership has enough competence and confidence to deal with agencies; the developers will then move to other communities. CAAs have found it useful to tap local sources such as universities, labor unions and the League of Women Voters as resources for leadership development.

4. Well Defined Goal

Setting a goal--the end result of discussion and decision--is essential to provide direction, sustain interest and participation, and bring a sense of achievement as the group moves forward. Because issues are often of long-standing concern and poor people despair of finding solutions to problems, defining a goal may provide the motivation for participation.

The goal should be specific, realistic and achievable; otherwise energies will be dissipated and disappointment will discourage continued participation. In the case of newly formed groups it may be better to start with a limited goal which has a fair prospect of early attainment rather than an ambitious one which requires complex action over a longer period. As residents gain experience in the process of group action, succeed in realizing their aims, gain confidence, and build their organization with small successes, they may tackle more difficult projects.

In defining goals resident groups may ask the following questions: (1) Where are we? (2) Where do we want to be? (3) What are the alternatives? (4) What are we willing to settle for?

Goals may be as modest as getting a traffic light installed at a busy intersection or having mail delivered to an isolated rural community. They may be as broad as helping plan an urban redevelopment project or having a rural area designated an economic development district. To achieve goals, the group may need to work only with local public and private organizations, or it may need to involve State and Federal agencies as well.

5. Broadening the Base of Resident Participation

Often only a small group will identify an issue requiring corrective action. More people need to be informed of the issue and invited to take part in meetings to discuss the problem.

In deciding who should be informed,what they need to know, and how to provide the essential information, the group may wish to seek advice from board members or other community sources versed in public relations and communications methods.

Communications should include suggestions of action the recipient can take. For example, times and places of meetings should be listed, or a phone number and name of person to contact given.

A variety of means may be used to build resident attendance at meetings. Personal contacts are usually most effective: neighborhood council members or target area residents may inform neighbors; door-to-door canvassing may be required. Fliers may be distributed, posters placed in neighborhood shops, announcements made at public meetings. Participants in CAA sponsored programs may be informed. Spot announcements may be made on radio and television,and notices placed in local newspapers. CAA newsletters may also be used.

Resident groups may also form coalitions with other low-income groups around specific issues of concern to each. By broadening the base of participation, coalitions between groups bring greater weight and support to the activity, thereby increasing its chances for success. Often over-lapping membership may provide a starting point to achieve joint or complementary action. If the issue is initiated by participants in CAA sponsored programs, the neighborhood and program advisory councils offer an immediate source for additional participation.

Broadening the base of participation is easier in cities which have distinct and populous neighborhoods. In rural areas, a sparse and scattered population may require a choice between limiting the activity to a small "cluster" of residents or covering a wide area to involve those residents who share a common interest.

Meetings must be held at times conducive to low-income participation and at places where residents feel comfortable. Evening and week-end meetings may be easier for residents who hold jobs or have babysitting problems. Neighborhood centers, storefronts, local cafes and people's homes are popular meeting places. Government buildings and downtown offices are less suitable.

Transportation to meetings in rural areas may present a problem. Some CAAs use car pools as a partial solution; staff and residents may be reimbursed for mileage costs provided funds have been requested in program account budgets. The Iron River, Michigan, CAA uses two mini-vans, GSA station wagons and pick-up trucks, and a government surplus automobile.[1] Large passenger vehicles or mini-buses may operate on regular schedules to transport low-income residents to scheduled meetings.

A number of meetings may be required before participants define their problems and goals. But each meeting must be geared toward action; discussion alone will not suffice. Residents will need to consider what information is available, what is needed, and how it can be obtained. They will discuss alternative courses of action. In the process, potential leaders and workers will emerge.

Sometimes low-income residents have found it useful to invite non-poor community leaders and agency representatives to meetings. Such persons may offer information, assistance or expertise to the resident group. Inviting representatives of other agencies or groups avoids the appearance of competition with these agencies, while securing their involvement may result in their support of and identification with the resident group. However, non-poor participants should maintain a consultant or supportive role, while the low-income residents retain decision-making authority.

6. Recognized Resident Group

When goals have been identified and a number of residents involved, participants may set up a structure with some operating guidelines to serve as a recognized vehicle for the activity. If the activity is undertaken by a CAA neighborhood organization or program advisory council which already has an identity, this may not be necessary.

Low-income people can participate in many kinds of groups. Among these are: multi-purpose neighborhood corporations, advisory groups

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1. Information on obtaining government property may be found in OEO Instruction 7003-1, "Acquisition and Use of Excess Government Property," June 17, 1969 and CAP Grantee Financial Policy and Procedures Guide, Volume V: Property and Supply Management; Chapter III, Section B-2.

(to CAA Boards, neighborhood centers, CAA programs, community agencies), social action groups (such as welfare rights organizations) and economic groups (day care cooperatives, buyers clubs, credit unions, economic development corporations).

The group structure may be as informal as a committee or it may adopt by-laws and eventually become incorporated. It may start from scratch or it may build on existing organizations. As the group moves toward its goal, it may remain closely affiliated with the CAA or it may operate independently of the CAA except for technical assistance.

The nature of the group, the structure adopted, and the degree to which it acts independently of the CAA will depend in part on the nature of the issue or activity and conditions in the local community. Groups engaged in economic self-help projects generally incorporate. Some groups which started as informal bodies interested in problems of housing, welfare, employment and education have expanded their goals and now operate under a set of by-laws. Others, which form for a specific limited purpose, disband once they have realized their goal. Several groups which began as neighborhood center advisory councils have become neighborhood corporations empowered to receive funds, operate programs and serve as advocates of their members' interests in community councils. Still other groups retain their informal association structure.

To build group identity, accountability and continuity, decisions taken at meetings should be recorded in writing and minutes sent to each participant. This procedure helps create expected communications channels between the individual participants and the group, provides a means of sharing information with other neighborhood people, and prevents internal hassles and disagreements over what was actually decided.

7. Support

Low-income people may be reluctant to join in group action for fear of retaliation. For example, in a New England town, welfare mothers hesitated to join a group formed to assure equitable welfare distribution, as required by State law, until assured by a respected community member of their right to organize and of his support.

Support is essential at each stage of a resident group's activities. One of the most important ways CAAs can support low-income groups is with financial assistance. OEO recognizes the financial

limitations under which CAAs operate; nonetheless, within their overall budgets, grantees can allocate funds to projects initiated by low-income residents. CAAs in OEO's Mid-Atlantic Region have made incentive grants to low-income groups as a means of stimulating community organization; in most cases the CAA's Incentive Grant Board of Judges is composed entirely of poor people. CAAs can provide funds for rent, travel (car pool) and babysitting costs or to permit resident groups to hire needed technical experts. CAAs also may maintain flexible staff contingency funds for lawyers, incorporation fees and consultants.

--- The Richmond, Virginia, CAA gave $3,400 to a resident group concerned with neighborhood renewal to let the group hire an advocate planner to help develop alternate plans to those of the Housing Authority.

--- The CAA located in Bath, Maine, has provided local groups with $10,000 to help them set up a sudden emergency loan fund, hire a day care center director for six months, and start a high school equivalency program.

CAA boards can endorse a resident group's formation and objectives. By relating back to the public and private groups they represent, board members can gain substantial community support for resident group activities. Board members can also be instrumental in helping resident groups form coalitions with other community groups when the interests of each coincide. The board might set up a standing committee, composed entirely of poor people, responsible for program or policy areas of special interest to them. Low-income representatives can also engage the support of their constituents for activities of other neighborhood and program advisory councils or resident groups. The last three techniques have the additional advantage of promoting area-wide interests rather than activities limited to one neighborhood.

CAA staff, including effective, trained, and dedicated neighborhood workers, provide a key source of support for resident groups. A CAA might hire a full-time professional negotiator whose job would be to promote dialogue between low-income communities or between a low-income group and a local, more powerful, middle-income group. CAAs can also provide staff directly to low-income organizations.

CAAs can help resident groups with training and technical assistance. Training can help the poor understand and identify their needs and learn problem-solving techniques. The CAA can employ competent technical specialists in areas of local interest. It can hire consultants to work with resident groups or itself serve as a source of technical assistance.

--- The Little Rock, Arkansas, CAA acts as a technical assistance resource for neighborhood councils, teaching them how to make their needs known to and negotiate with local officials.

Finally, CAA-sponsored programs can support resident groups. Legal Services programs can be a source of legal advice to low-income groups in setting up neighborhood corporations; establishing buyers clubs, credit unions, cooperatives and other economic development projects; and in learning about Federal, State, and local laws and regulations in the areas of welfare, housing, and employment. Legal Services lawyers can represent resident groups in test cases involving enforcement of welfare, housing and employment laws, codes, and regulations.

FACTORS AND TECHNIQUES IN SUCCESSFUL CONDUCT OF GROUP ACTIVITIES

Once a group has formed, additional factors can help it work effectively toward its goal. These include: (1) a plan of action; (2) a well documented case with specific proposals; (3) access to training and technical assistance; (4) self-help efforts; (5) community-wide support; (6) publicity and public education; and (7) action by the group.

1. Plan of Action

Once residents have identified goals, they should decide upon a plan of action. The plan is built from several elements. Information of various types will be needed. Resources required to achieve the goal should be identified. Alternative courses of action should be considered. Strategies, tactics and progressive stages of action should be decided upon. A timetable for each phase of the plan should be established.

Resident groups need five kinds of information to formulate plans of action.

The first is a measure of the need, that is, the seriousness of the problem.

The second is a measure of interest among residents to secure improvement and their willingness to work toward the goal.

The third is a knowledge of Federal, State or local regulations that should be enforced, or requirements and procedures that must be followed to achieve the goal.

The fourth is an understanding of the nature of the institutions, agencies and people in the community--their performance, their operations and their attitudes--through which the group must work.

The fifth is an understanding of ways by which constructive group action can be carried out to enable groups to influence decisions and actions in the community.

Often the group selects an individual or steering committee to do the basic homework. The committee may consult with public and private agencies, professional organizations and other groups which have undertaken similar projects.

--- 150 farmers from Scott, Lee and Wise Counties, Virginia, chose a steering committee to learn how to form a trellis tomato growing cooperative. They learned about setting up by-laws and incorporating, how to finance the co-op, the amount of labor needed to produce an acre of tomatoes, how much money was needed to get started, the cost of machinery to package tomatoes, the sales volume needed to break even, and where markets were available. The steering committee visited tomato cooperatives in North Carolina and tomato-packing plants in Florida and talked with the local FHA county agent and staff from the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service and State Economic Opportunity Office.

--- Members of a resident club in Dryden, Lee County, Virginia, appointed five men to look into ways of getting a water system. They consulted the regional economic development agency and an engineering firm which had designed a water system for a nearby town. The steering committee and representatives of the two agencies then reported back to the club on different ways of setting up the system and technical considerations involved.

--- One of the first steps the Gardner, Massachusetts, neighborhood council took to get housing standards enforced was to study the Massachusetts State health law requiring housing inspection and ask the Legal Aid Society to interpret the inspection code.

In developing a plan, the group should determine what resources are needed to realize its goal. With knowledge of what it needs and what it has, the group can identify what is required from community and other sources and decide how to get the additional resources.

Alternative courses of action, strategies and tactics chosen will depend on the cohesiveness of the group, the degree of sophistication of its members; the leadership ability which emerges; the complexity of the problem addressed; and often the level of community understanding and support. The strategies chosen should be appropriate in terms of the goal.

In considering alternative strategies, the group should determine whether objectives conflict with or complement the interests of other poor or non-poor groups in the community. It should anticipate any potential conflicts and identify the groups likely to be involved, so that it can prepare to minimize or overcome resistance. Similarly, it should know where its interests coincide with those of other groups so that coalitions can be formed in support of the goal.

A number of different community channels may be used to pursue a goal. Included are political, economic, social, legal and interest group channels. The resident group needs to decide which one or combination of these offers the best possibilities for success, and how they can be used most effectively.

One of the most graphic ways to choose a course of action is to put the alternative approaches on a horizontal line from "least" to "most." In any endeavor, some actions require more concerted effort than others. Seeing these courses compared on a "least-most" scale, the group can plan its action on the basis of the degree of priority of the goal and the relative strength of the commitment to it.

The timetable for carrying out each phase of the plan and achieving the goal should be realistic. The amount of time required will vary according to the activity. Some groups have achieved aims within a matter of weeks; others have worked on a problem for a year or more. The group should proceed at its own pace. Members should be kept informed of problems and progress. Most resident groups have found it necessary to hold frequent meetings to report progress, get new guidance from participants, sustain members' interest, modify tactics, and secure wider community support.

2. Well Documented Case With Specific Proposals

Resident groups have had greater success when they can present well-documented evidence of need and specific suggestions on how their objectives can be realized. Sometimes a show of widespread need and support is the turning point in getting action from responsible community agencies. Low-income people can be polled on a variety of matters to determine extent of need and number of eligible recipients of services and to evaluate on-going services.

--- Members of a neighborhood council in Long Beach, New York, surveyed low-income residents in an urban renewal area and found 60 percent more people eligible for low-cost housing than had previously been identified by the urban renewal agency. The new figures led to a three-fold increase in the number of housing units planned.

--- To get a surplus food program started, members of a resident club in Freeport, Maine, contacted the State welfare office to determine the number of eligible people, circulated a petition in local shoe factories where workers made marginal

wages, and conducted house to house surveys. Five hundred potential recipients were uncovered and the program was approved.

Proposals need to be distinguished from goals so that agencies whose action is being sought can react to concrete suggestions. The more definite a proposal the group can formulate, the greater the likelihood of its having an impact.

--- In Decatur, Illinois, a group of low-income and other community members drafted a strong fair housing ordinance for presentation to City Council, which was eventually adopted in substance.

--- In East St. Louis, Illinois, the Follow-Through Parent Advisory Committee set forth the specific duties and responsibilities it wished to assume, and ultimately obtained the school board's agreement.

3. Training and Technical Assistance

Training and technical assistance are important to help resident groups decide on plans of action, develop proposals, and carry out projects. Training and technical assistance to low-income groups may involve: techniques for identifying needs and solving problems; background information on Federal, State, and local program policies, regulations and funding procedures; ways to mobilize resources; methods of building community support; professional know-how in a variety of fields; human relations training; and training in processes of group action.

The training and technical assistance sources must be acceptable to the resident group. It may be desirable for the group to select the source, to increase its responsiveness to the needs of the group.

Technical assistance may be furnished by CAA staff and board members; Federal, State and public and private agency staffs; Technical Action Panels; State Economic Opportunity Offices; and community individuals. Business, labor unions, universities, social agencies and professional organizations are all excellent technical assistance sources. So are resident groups which have had experience working on a similar problem. Technical assistance may be donated or the CAA

may make funds available to the group to hire professional help.

--- A produce and marketing expert of the North Carolina Department of Agriculture gave farmers in North Wilkesboro help in starting a farm produce marketing co-op.

--- A resident group in San Diego, California, which secured $400,000 from HUD for low-income home owners to renovate their homes, helped a similar organization in another target area get $600,000 from HUD.

--- The City Manager in Phoenix, Arizona, appointed a member of his staff to work with a neighborhood council in developing a street improvement program.

4. Self-Help Efforts

Resident groups can often advance their cause and enlist community support by undertaking efforts on their own behalf. Particularly in rural areas, self-help activities can help overcome traditional attitudes towards poor people. Self-help efforts indicate to the rest of the community the genuine concern of the people involved and their willingness to work for their goals. If the efforts also involve other residents of the target area or members of the larger community, they broaden community awareness of the need or problem and enhance the group's chances for a favorable hearing and response. Some self-help activities undertaken by resident groups include donations of work and time and fund-raising efforts.

--- Members of a youth council in Long Beach, New York, renovated a building to be used as a youth center to speed up its opening.

--- Members of a resident group in Bath, Maine, established a Sudden Emergency Loan Fund by earning money from a talent show and thrift shop. Instead of paying interest, borrowers pledge one hour's work in fund-raising for every $10 borrowed.

--- Residents of Highland Bend in Scioto County, Ohio, raised $150 to pay initial costs of providing school bus service to their community.

5. Community-wide Support

Support and involvement of the non-poor community is often crucial in achieving goals of resident groups. CAA board members and community leaders can help pave the way among other agencies and individuals for better understanding of and sympathy with the aims of the low-income group. They can create awareness of problems among the non-poor community. They can help allay reservations of some community leaders and agencies about the poor participating in community affairs. Finally, they can help mobilize resources needed to attain the group's ends.

In most cases of successful resident group action, members of the non-poor community have been involved. Similarly, where resident groups have not succeeded, failure can sometimes be traced in part to failure to seek support of the non-poor in the effort. Opposition on the part of the larger community often is caused by lack of understanding and information about the issue. In analyzing the defeat of a housing code supported by the Phoenix CAA and neighborhood councils, the CAA concluded that the code was rejected partly because it had not been explained adequately to residents of the outer city and to home owners within the target area.

Community leaders and agencies have often been instrumental in helping resident groups.

--- In Fayette County, Tennessee, a few community leaders have played a major role in marshalling support for the CAA and helping to weld important elements of community leadership into a productive working relationship.

--- In Decatur, Illinois, members of the NAACP, Council of Churches, local university, and League of Women Voters helped residents get a strong fair housing ordinance enacted.

--- In Augusta, Arkansas, the County Judge and Mayor helped residents obtain the support of the non-poor community in setting up and operating a neighborhood service center.

Sometimes resident groups look beyond the immediate community for support. Officials of Federal and State agencies can be a source of

help in seeing that rules and regulations are enforced. So can local officials in neighboring areas.

--- An appeal by target area residents of Long Beach, New York, to HUD to investigate activities of the local Urban Renewal Authority led to improved relocation practices of the local agency.

--- In Gardner, Massachusetts, health directors from two nearby cities testified before the Gardner City Council in behalf of a resident group's proposal that the city housing inspection code be enforced.

Support by the non-poor community can be mobilized in several ways. CAA board members--both poor and non-poor--can speak at meetings of religious and social groups, women's clubs and professional organizations. Individual board members or community leaders can talk with local government and agency officials.

Coalitions formed between resident and non-poor groups are a most effective means of consolidating support for resident group goals and making the support visible. Members of the non-poor community may themselves organize, or they may be helped to form groups by CAA staff and board members. While these groups work with resident groups, each should maintain its separate identity and independence.

--- In Roanoke, Virginia, four organizations of non-poor people stand ready to help the resident Welfare Rights Organization. These groups do not meet with the resident groups but coalesce behind the Welfare Rights Organization when called upon to support an issue.

--- Also in Roanoke, a bi-racial middle-income group, Seriously Concerned Citizens of Roanoke, backed a resident group's efforts to have the housing code enforced.

6. Publicity and Public Education

Publicity is a necessary tool to create awareness of issues of interest to the poor and to gain support of the non-poor community for activities of resident groups. Low-income organizations have used the mass media effectively to publicize their aims and broaden participation and support among poor and non-poor.

Issues should be stated clearly, concisely and accurately and the public should be given the whole story.

The audience to be reached, form the material should take, and method of distribution must be carefully chosen for best effect. The OEO Office of Public Affairs has published a two volume handbook outlining ways of promoting good public relations. The first volume is entitled The Printed Word; the second is Sound and Sight. Both can be obtained from OEO, Office of Public Affairs, 1200 19th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20506.

Press conferences and free public service announcement time on radio/TV offer vehicles for presentation of issues. Newspapers have printed stories and run columns and editorials on problems of concern to low-income residents. Radio and television have covered local problems in their newscasts, interviewed representatives of target groups, presented documentaries, and flashed spot announcements of meetings and activities. Films have been prepared and distributed on television and to civic organizations.

Sometimes the mass media are reluctant to cover activities of resident groups or do not present information accurately. In the first case, the resident group may enlist the support of sympathetic members of the community, such as large advertisers, to use their influence to see that resident group concerns are aired. Or the resident group may create its own communication channels by holding a series of public meetings, putting out its own publications, or using mailing lists of other community groups, such as churches and public agencies, to distribute material to poor and non-poor alike. This last technique may result in the opening up of new channels of communication as well as making the traditional sources of news presentation more receptive.

7. Group Action

Before carrying out its plan of action, the resident group has usually identified a progression of steps which may be necessary to realize its goal. These will differ according to the nature of the goal. If the outcome depends mainly upon the action of the residents, as in the case of setting up a cooperative or credit union, pledges are solicited and election of officers arranged as more residents become involved. When the problem deals with changes in local laws or practices, or obtaining additional services, the

resident group usually starts by bringing its concern to the attention of the responsible agency or official.

Initial requests for action may be presented in a letter from the group. In most cases these are followed-up by direct personal contact. The group may send a representative or delegation to talk to or attend meetings with responsible officials. It may invite the official to a group meeting to discuss the problem. Sometimes representatives of the group present the request at official meetings of the City Council, county commission or agency boards.

Sometimes resident groups hold "dress rehearsals" before meeting with officials to be sure they have the points they wish to make clearly in mind. Other times they may send as their representative someone acquainted with the official.

If contacts, discussions and negotiations between the group and agency do not result in satisfactory solutions, the group may turn to the larger community for support. It may hold a community meeting attended by poor and non-poor to discuss the problem; representatives of the mass media may be invited. In some cases, low-income residents trying to get better school services have joined PTSs in an attempt to work within the school structure to satisfy their needs. One or several low-income residents may meet individually with key community leaders to solicit support. In other cases poor people have addressed problems by exercising their right to vote in local elections, in referenda, and in bond issues.

To indicate the extent of concern with an issue, resident groups have presented petitions to agencies, requesting action on a problem. In many communities, groups of poor people have attended public hearings of local governments and agencies to express their views on an issue.

When discussions with local officials prove unsatisfactory, resident groups sometimes appeal to Federal and State authorities for help in realizing their goals in the local community. HUD has helped poor people get citizen participation requirements enforced in Model Cities and public housing programs. Neighborhood groups have asked State health departments to see that housing code and building inspection regulations were enforced. State departments of welfare have been asked to step in to assure that welfare regulations were administered equitably in local communities. SEOOs may help secure support from pertinent State agencies. Occasionally resident groups have brought test cases as a means of clarifying an agency's rules and procedures. Sometimes letters to State legislators and Federal Congressmen help break a stalemate.

When previous efforts have failed, some groups have sought to communicate the urgency of their concern by such actions as orderly and legal picketing, boycotts, public rallies, and demonstrations.[2]

Regardless of the nature of the effort, nothing stimulates participation as much as evidence of success which builds the members' confidence in their ability to affect conditions of concern to them. With the stimulus of success, resident groups can continue to mature, become effective catalysts for change, and take their place with non-poor organizations in the community.

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2. OEO Instructions 6907-3, "Employee Participation in Direct Action," December 18, 1968, and 6907-2, "Limitation with Respect to Unlawful Demonstrations, Rioting and Civil Disturbances," October 31, 1968, set limits on CAA staff participation in group activities.

APPENDIX A

CASE STUDIES OF RESIDENT PARTICIPATION

Housing Code Enforcement: Montachusetts Opportunity Council, Inc. Leominster, Massachusetts

Gardner is the only city in Massachusetts that has no zoning regulations. Sanitary conditions in low-income residences were far below state minimum standards. Health department enforcement of a state health law requiring housing inspection was slack and haphazard.

Low-income residents brought housing problems to the attention of the Gardner Community Action Committee (CAC), an area council of the CAA. A VISTA survey disclosed widespread unsanitary conditions in homes. The CAC, wanting to create better housing conditions, set as an immediate goal establishment and enforcement of health standards through the addition of a housing inspector to the staff of the Gardner Health Department.

The CAC set up a Health Committee composed of residents living in substandard housing. The Committee studied the law, then held "dress rehearsals" in preparation for meetings with health department staff. Next a delegation met with the health department to outline the problem and ask that inspection standards be established. The request was denied.

The Committee then asked the Legal Aid Society to interpret the health law. The Society's opinion held that the law had to be enforced, although the method of enforcement was not spelled out. Then, with the help of a CAC member who was also chairman of the City Council, the Committee arranged individual and small group meetings with the Mayor and city councilors to gain their backing. Newspaper support was solicited and received. CAC members wrote to the State health department asking it to assume the code enforcement and inspection function.

The Health Committee had the inspection problem placed on the City Council's agenda. During hearings, the health directors from Fitchburg and Leominster gave expert testimony on how to carry out the law and the Attorney General's opinion on the extent to which the health department had to comply with the legislation was entered in the hearings.

The health department has hired a housing inspector paid from city funds.

Mothers Who Care Welfare Organization: Montachusetts Opportunity Council, Inc., Leominster, Massachusetts

Mothers Who Care is an incorporated organization of AFDC mothers. Its primary purpose is to bring AFDC recipients together to discuss common problems and further joint goals. The group has gotten the local welfare office to correct inequities in welfare allowance distribution. Its recognition by other community agencies is evidenced by the United Fund's invitation to the group to have two representatives sit on its day care center advisory board.

Mothers Who Care was organized by a VISTA who, in talking to AFDC mothers individually, found almost all interested in meeting with other mothers in similar situations. At first, several mothers feared retaliatory action by the welfare office if they joined in a group organization, but were reassured by a respected community member of their right to organize and of his support.

The group's initial aim was to achieve good working relations with other community organizations. Because the group felt it would be more effective if it had the respect of the community, Mothers Who Care disassociated from other State and national welfare organizations, particularly those which had tried to cause reform through non-violent protests or civil disobedience. Press coverage helped create the desired image.

A major problem was lack of communication between welfare recipients and local welfare office staff. Communication was also poor between local, State and regional administrators. The immediate problems of the Fitchburg mothers were inaccessibility of local welfare officials (the office was open only one hour a day) and lack of uniformity in applying welfare laws which resulted in an inequitable distribution of funds in Fitchburg as compared with other cities. Welfare mothers in other districts received back-to-school clothing allotments and other benefits which, despite individual requests, were denied the Fitchburg mothers. The group had hoped that the situation would improve in July 1968 when the welfare system went under the auspices of the State, but no changes occurred.

The Mothers Who Care Board of Directors decided in August 1968 (a year after incorporation) to meet with the Commissioner of Public Welfare to discuss their problems. The board asked the county legal aid society to help formulate an effective and reasonable presentation of their grievances and that attorneys negotiate with local and state welfare departments.

Members of Mothers Who Care and their attorney first met with lawyers representing a Boston welfare group to learn about recent events in Boston. An interim committee had set guidelines for household

furniture and furnishings for welfare allotments. Mothers Who Care gained representation on this committee. Next, the attorney and group representatives met with members of the Department of Public Welfare to discuss eleven grievances and the department's organizational structure. Arrangements were made for a member of the department to meet in Fitchburg with Mothers Who Care.

In September the Commissioner of Public Welfare ruled that special clothing allowances could be paid under certain circumstances. Welfare mothers in Boston, Worcester and other districts requested and received back-to-school clothing funds. Mothers in Fitchburg, making the same requests individually, were refused.

Shortly after, Mothers Who Care presented their requests in a visit to the local welfare office. They notified the Regional Administrator of their action. At that time, individual clothing requests were processed and funds provided shortly after.

Retention of Playground: Montachusetts Opportunity Council, Inc., Leominster, Massachusetts

In the spring 1968 the largest industrial firm in Gardner, Massachusetts, requested a lease on a city lot which was used as a neighborhood playground, for conversion to a parking lot for the firm's employees. The Parks Commission and most City Councilors favored granting the lease. Representatives of the CAA neighborhood council went to the Parks Commission and City Council to get information on the proposal and enter a protest, but were refused a hearing. Then 135 neighborhood residents attended a Parks Commission meeting at which the proposal was to be voted on to protest; when the residents appeared the Commission refused to hold an open meeting and adjourned without voting. The next evening 135 residents attended a City Council meeting, but despite their protest, most Council members intended to vote for the lease.

A few days later, the neighborhood council invited the Mayor, City Councilors and Park Commissioners to attend a neighborhood meeting, at which 250 participants were guaranteed, to explain their position. On the afternoon of the meeting, the Mayor and several Councilmen called to say that the meeting was unnecessary since the firm had withdrawn its request for a lease.

As an aftermath, the neighborhood council was approached by the city, Chamber of Commerce and school system for help in promoting construction of a new high school and passage of a zoning ordinance. The Mayor and President of the Chamber of Commerce have become members of the council. The council can now trade its support for support of public and private agencies for neighborhood council interests.

Improved Relocation Practices in Urban Renewal: Economic Opportunity Commission of Nassau County, Long Island, New York

Concern with relocation procedures in Long Beach, Long Island led neighborhood center workers to identify resident community leaders to participate with the workers in a training program conducted by OEO consultants in citizen rights, allowable relocation payments and resident choice of relocation housing under the Urban Renewal program. Following training, target area residents met with staff of the Urban Renewal Agency in a futile effort to obtain changes in the relocation process.

Next, residents requested a HUD investigation of Urban Renewal Authority activities. When HUD agreed, the city set up a renewal office in the renewal area and hired a full-time relocation officer and two black secretaries. The Police Department opened a community relations bureau to which were assigned two black policemen, one of whom was to work out of the renewal site office.

HUD investigated charges of collusion and excess fee rates levied by the Urban Renewal Agency. Employees involved were fired and a new firm was hired which worked with the CAA neighborhood council to reduce attrition rate in the renewal area. A survey conducted by the council using black workers (as compared with white surveyers employed by the renewal agency) turned up 60 percent more eligible residents than had previously been identified and led to a council demand for increased housing units in the project. As a result, the city requested 200 additional units, for a total of 300 units, three times the number originally sought.

Surplus Commodities Program: Merrymeeting Community Action, Inc., Bath, Maine

A CAA community worker in Freeport, Maine, who had had extensive contacts with people in the area, suggested that low-income residents meet to discuss common problems. At the time of the initial meeting, specific issues had not been identified although many were obviously in need of attention. Strategically, however, the community worker wanted to follow a course which would give low-income people some self-determination and break the cycle of imposed solutions to needs of poor people.

The first meeting took place in November 1967. About 60 people attended. A rented store served as the meeting place and eventual headquarters of the group. While most of the CAA worker's contacts had been with poor people, the organization intended to address itself to problems of the whole town; hence the name Freeport People's

Club. Officers were elected but by-laws or articles of incorporation were not drawn up so that the organization could grow at its own pace, chart its own course and be as open as possible. Dues of ten cents a week were to be used as an emergency sick fund for members; payment of dues was voluntary based on ability and inclination to contribute.

An immediate issue was obtaining surplus foods. At the time, the town had no surplus commodity program and individual inquiries to the town manager were received negatively. Some years before, the town had operated a commodity distribution program, but few people were certified since there was no outreach. In addition, recipients had had no choice over amount or kind of items they received. As a result, a large portion of unuseable items ended in the town dump. Hence, town officials were reluctant to reactivate the program.

To change this attitude, club members undertook an independent survey to determine the need for and interest in the program. They contacted the State Health and Welfare Office to determine the number of eligible people. They conducted house-to-house surveys and circulated petitions in local shoe factories where workers made a marginal wage due to seasonal employment. A list of 500 potential recipients resulted.

The town manager was impressed by the number of eligible persons and the initiative and industry of the Peoples Club. An item empowering the town to begin a program was entered on the town warrant. Club members then enlisted the support of other townspeople, not of low-income. A local minister was a valuable ally.

Club members and other low-income people contacted by the club attended the town meeting at which the item was to be voted in numbers. The item passed by a large majority. The town was empowered to contract with the CAA to certify and deliver surplus food. For this service, the town paid the CAA sixty cents per person certified to cover handling and shipping costs.

The next step was to obtain certification. Maine State Department of Health and Welfare requires that certifiers take a training course in procedures. Two club members and the community worker took the two week course and in a month had certified 180 families. A town facility is used as the drop-off point. Club members help unload the truck and distribute the commodities. Members also deliver commodities to homes of people unable to come to the distribution point.

The entire process, from the time of the first meeting until the first delivery of food, took nine months.

Improved Bus Service: Richmond Community Action Program, Inc., Richmond, Virginia

The Leigh-Venable bus line has a four to five mile run from the Central target area of Richmond to the extreme end of town in the Church Hill target area. The line serves school children, university students and workers. Only two buses ran frequently and during rush hours it took three quarters of an hour to ride a mile and a quarter on the crowded bus.

When the Transit Company requested a fare increase, a member of the CAA's Central Advisory Council brought the inadequate service to the attention of the center coordinator and advisory council. The

council was not interested in pursuing the problem. So, on his own, the council member spent two days surveying the line's timetable and frequency of service, then talked to neighborhood people and the Afro-American news weekly which printed two "awareness" stories.

The man then formed a Metropolitan Better Bus Service Committee of about 100 people (about two-thirds active) including both low-income people and professors, doctors, teachers and ministers. After five meetings held during three weeks in neighborhood churches and the neighborhood center, the Committee drew up a plan for suggested routes and expanded services on the line. Members of the Transit Company attended the meetings but did not respond to the committee's suggestions.

In June, the committee focused community-wide attention on the problem by suggesting that Richmond citizens not ride the line for a day. (The specific line was featured rather than all lines to pinpoint the committee's concern.) About 85 percent of the community responded and press coverage, which had followed the company's fare increase request, was good.

In July about 200 residents attended the City Council meeting at which the request for an increase was considered. The committee presented its plan for improved service. City Council authorized the fare increase but also required the Transit Company to add more buses to the line, speed up service, and reroute the line to serve a university and hospital.

The Transit Company complied within three months. Before making the changes, representatives talked to residents of the two target communities--the first time the Transit Authority had gone into poverty areas for ideas on how to improve service.

Fulton Ad-Hoc Committee for General Neighborhood Renewal Plan: Richmond Community Action Program, Inc., Richmond, Virginia

The immediate problem was to prevent the industrialization of a low-income, primarily residential area. The broader issue was resident participation in urban renewal planning.

Fulton, one of the oldest sections in Richmond, was once a mixed middle-class community. Population decreased between 1950 and 1960 as wealthier whites moved to the suburbs and part of the area was converted to commercial and industrial use. Industrial land is at a premium in Richmond, and Fulton is a prime industrial area.

Urban renewal has been talked about since Fulton was rezoned for industry ten years ago. In the fall 1966, the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority (RRHA) conducted surveys to develop a General Neighborhood Renewal Plan. In April 1967, the RRHA, to comply with HUD citizen participation requirements, selected an advisory council composed of twenty Fulton residents, who were members of the Fulton Improvement Association, a middle-class homeowners group.

In May 1967 neighborhood workers needed an issue to develop block clubs in Fulton. A rallying issue arose in November when a landowner in Fulton proposed building a middle-income apartment unit. To build the complex it was necessary to obtain a rezoning ordinance from the city.

The neighborhood center coordinator and VISTA urged block club members to discuss the proposal with the landowner. The VISTA arranged a meeting between the landowner, who hoped to get resident support, and 15 representatives of three block clubs. This meeting was followed by a second one at the neighborhood center where the landowner and his architect discussed their plans with 150 residents, the first time a private architect had been brought to the community to explain plans.

Before the second meeting, residents were briefed at block club meetings and prepared questions for the landowner. At the meeting it became apparent that rentals in the proposed complex would be too high for most residents, and that the residents did not support the proposal.

In December three Fulton residents spoke against the rezoning request when it was presented to City Council. In a 5-4 vote, council postponed a decision pending a report from the RRHA on how the proposed apartments would fit in with the authority's urban renewal plans.

This was the first Fulton residents, including members of the Authority's Advisory Council, knew of an Authority plan. Concern spread, and at the suggestion of the neighborhood center coordinator, a meeting of representatives of all agencies in Fulton was called to consider what should be done. The first meeting was attended by 100 representatives of 30 agencies. Subsequent meetings were held throughout January.

In the middle of February 1968, City Council rejected the rezoning request because it did not support tentative Authority plans to convert all but about 20 percent of the area to industrial use.

The stage was ripe for further action. In the first place, the Authority plan threatened to displace most Fulton residents. Then, too, residents were pleased at having played a part in the defeat of the rezoning request and were motivated to act.

For the rest of February weekly meetings were held at which the President of the Urban League, a councilman and RRHA representatives spoke. In early March the Fulton Improvement Association called a meeting to discuss specific measures residents could take to learn about and participate in the Authority's planning. (The fact that an established group with status which had provided members for the Authority's Advisory Council called the meeting helped break down jurisdictional barriers and unite Fulton residents.)

It was decided to replace the Authority's Advisory Council with a new Ad Hoc Committee to deal with the Housing Authority. A used car dealer was elected Chairman, and he appointed an eight member committee broadly representative of the community. The committee later also served as the CAA advisory council's housing committee.

For the next several weeks, the Ad Hoc Committee refused to meet with the Housing Authority to get RRHA to accept resident participation, since under HUD regulations the Authority must meet with citizens. The impasse was broken when the old advisory council introduced the new Ad Hoc Committee to Authority staff. In addition, the Authority had hired a Negro community liaison specialist, the first time a black had been employed in an executive capacity. This man subsequently played an important role in interpreting resident and Authority positions to each group. RRHA agreed to reconsider the tentative plans, to meet monthly with the committee and to send representatives to Fulton each week to answer resident questions.

During this same period, resident meetings attended by outside speakers continued. A City Councilman wrote a series of columns in the evening paper recommending a referendum on residents' views of urban renewal with results forwarded to HUD. Another Councilman who had supported the Authority's tentative plans now favored keeping Fulton residential. The Fulton problem was receiving widespread community attention and support, the significance of which was increased in an election year.

Additional publicity was provided in April when an instructor of cinematography at a local university produced a twenty minute film on Fulton, financed by private contributions. The film, showing Fulton's blighted housing conditions with comments from Fulton residents, was shown on television and to civic groups.

The real turning point came in June when the CAA gave the Ad Hoc Committee $3,400 to hire an advocate planner for three months. For the first time, poor people had access to technical knowledge and expertise from a professional hired by and directly responsible to them. During the summer the planner secured a temporary suspension of Housing Authority planning activities by appealing to HUD, obtained Housing Authority data, and assisted residents in preparing alternate plans. He held a mass meeting to get Fulton residents' ideas, and with the help of a VISTA and a market analyst, conducted an opinion survey of 56 percent of the Fulton population on how they felt about Fulton.

In September, the residents adopted an Ad Hoc Committee Statement of Goals as a guideline in preparing the General Neighborhood Renewal Plan. Throughout September and October, the advocate planner and a Housing Authority planner developed land-use plans. In late October both planners presented their plans at a meeting attended by about 150 residents. Neither was completely acceptable, and a sub-committee was appointed to meet with both planners to draw up a new plan. This was unanimously adopted by about 100 residents at the end of October.

The new plan was accepted by the Housing Authority and passed on to the Richmond Planning Commission for review. In January, the City Planning Commission staff presented an alternate proposal which increased the industrial area and revised the direction of roadways. At an open meeting attended by 200-300 residents, they supported retaining the Ad Hoc Committee's plan. This was finally done.

Dryden Water System: Lee County Community Action, Inc., Jonesboro, Virginia

At a meeting early in 1966 of the Dryden Community Development Club, a community organization formed under the auspices of the Lee County CAA, residents began talking about a water system for the area. Few people had a dependable way of getting water; one of two "systems" served a rest home and local school, the other, privately owned, piped water from a spring to 65 families.

The club appointed five men to investigate chances of getting a water system. They held an organizational meeting and elected officers for their new group. LENOWISCO, the regional economic development agency, told them how to get the system, and a representative of a system in a near-by county spoke to members of the club about ways of setting up a water authority.

Additional technical help was obtained from The Bost Engineering Firm of Knoxville, Tennessee, and a judge (a member of the Lee County Water Authority) who acted as the group's attorney.

The committee originally thought of a thirty mile water system; 350 subscribers were needed to make a filtration plant economical. When residents in the upper end of the county were not receptive, a second plan was devised to buy water from the largest town in the area, but this also met resistance. The committee then approached Pennington Gap, which had recently completed a new water system and filtration plant. The town was willing to sell its water, but the planned number of customers had to be reduced to 150.

The committee's plan would require laying 13 1/2 miles of pipe, a 100,000 gallon reservoir and a booster station for pumping. After determining the basics of the plan, the committee got in touch with the FHA County Agent in Jonesville and the EDA representative in Abingdon for advice on how to get the necessary funds.

First, they had to incorporate as the Dryden Water Authority. Then they had to acquire rights to already existing water systems, since they could not get a Federal grant if they would be competing with private industry. The system serving the rest home and school posed no problem. However, the private owner of the other system was less cooperative. First he tried to get his customers to sign exclusive ten year leases with him. When that failed he asked $20,000 for his system. The club called a meeting to discuss the crisis and decided to pay the price. They asked those who could afford to help to join together in buying him out. It was a gamble but eight residents volunteered to sign a bank note to acquire the second system.

Potential subscribers had to be signed up before applying for a grant. Committee members talked to 500 property owners to obtain the necessary signatures. Applications were made to EDA and FHA for funds, part of which would be used to buy the two existing systems. During the long waiting period, efforts were made to speed up the award of funds. Members of the club called and wrote their Congressmen, their State Senator and their U.S. Senators. In the meantime, the Lee County CAA director met with OEO officials who contacted EDA.

Funds were approved June 30, 1967. Construction bids were opened in the spring 1968. Construction began in August 1968 and was completed in February 1969. The new system serves 150 households, two industrial plants, the school and rest home. Already the Dryden Water Authority is talking about adding another 50-75 households to the system and is trying to formulate a plan to merge all the water authorities in the area.

Parent Advisory Committee for Follow-Through Program: Economic Opportunity Commission of St. Clair County, East St. Louis, Illinois

In late 1967, the East St. Louis School Board, prospective recipient of an OEO grant for a Follow-Through program, recognized that to qualify, a Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) would have to be set up. The board asked the director of the CAA's Head Start program for advice on meeting the requirement. The director recommended that the Head Start Parent Advisory Committee serve as a temporary PAC. The goals of the director and PAC were clear: for the PAC to become the permanent, effective policy-making body for the Follow-Through program.

The Head Start staff conducted meetings with the twelve member Head Start PAC, informing them of their rights in the Follow-Through program, explaining the program in detail, and preparing the PAC for debate with the school board on the issue of whether the PAC should make important program decisions.

When the PAC met with the school board, the parents wanted final decision-making power regarding (1) hiring the director and teacher aides; (2) setting staff job requirements; and (3) determining the educational program. The board rejected the proposal outright, charging it would delay progress and hurt chances for getting a grant. The PAC suggested that the school board apply for a planning grant. This was done and a grant received.

With planning funds, members of the PAC visited Champaign, Illinois; New York City; and Kansas City and St. Louis, Missouri, to learn about different kinds of Follow-Through programs. Armed with expert knowledge about the Follow-Through program, the PAC prevailed upon the board to accept its proposal.

The former Head Start PAC has now become the permanent Follow-Through PAC. The PAC decides program development and operations matters.

Rezoning Project: Economic Opportunity Commission of St. Clair County, East St. Louis, Illinois

Rush City, a residential area in East St. Louis is bounded by railroads on three sides and a state highway on the fourth. In 1967, 819 people lived in the 150 acre area, almost all of whom were Negro. In 1961 the City Council rezoned the area for redevelopment as an industrial park. Thereafter, all building permits for new residential construction were denied.

Neighborhood center non-professional workers, hired in 1966, organized the Rush City Improvement Association, which set as its first goal changing the zoning back from industrial to residential. The neighborhood center provided office space and secretarial help for the association.

In late 1966, five association representatives and an FHA representative visited the East St. Louis Planning Commission without success. The FHA representative advised the group to develop a strong community organization. In January 1967 the association was reorganized and grew to include nearly 100 members.

Association representatives began attending a series of Model City policy-making meetings. They asked how Rush City would be handled in the Model City proposals, particularly with regard to rezoning. The Mayor requested the Public Administration and Metropolitan Affairs Program of Southern Illinois University (SIU) to recommend future courses of action for Rush City.

Meanwhile, neighborhood center staff kept the association informed of the status of the rezoning effort. Numerous strategy meetings were held in 1967 and the early part of 1968. Representatives of an East St. Louis improvement group composed largely of business and professional people met with the association. After residents presented their case to the man who had favored the industrial zoning, he said he was surprised to learn that people lived in Rush City.

In March 1968 the SIU plan was submitted with a detailed analysis and proposal to improve Rush City as a residential area. A Planning Commission hearing on Rush City zoning held at City Hall was attended by 75 Rush City residents, including many men who took the day off from work to be there.

Two weeks later the residents returned, showing slides of the community and presenting their cases, stressing how long the residents had lived in Rush City and how they wanted to stay and improve the community. The Mayor agreed and shortly after the area was rezoned residential.

Highland Bend School Bus Service: Community Action Organization of Scioto County, Inc., Portsmouth, Ohio

In 1966, 80 percent of the 527 people in Highland Bend were poor. The area had 120 school age children and 12 registered voters. The roads were so bad that postmen were not allowed to walk them, yet the children had to walk an average of 1 1/2 miles on the same roads to school. The main entrance to the community is spanned by a one lane bridge which is under water part of the year. Half the children went to school 75 percent of the time, the other half 50 percent of the time. Two out of twenty seniors in high school graduated.

Groups from Highland Bend had asked the school board many times for school bus service, but were unorganized and emotional in their requests. In 1966 a neighborhood center director asked Highland Bend residents to identify their greatest need. School bus service topped the list. The CAA then began mapping strategy with the residents.

A small organized delegation under CAA guidance approached the school board to no avail. The group then decided to join the PTA and establish a majority. This did not produce results either.

The next step was for the residents to express their opinions through the ballot in the local election. Within the next few months, 80 Highland Bend residents registered.

In the spring 1967, a vote was scheduled for a school levy for operating costs. As part of the strategy to get the school bus, the Highland Bend group notified the superintendent they would work for the bond issue if guaranteed the school bus. They got no response. Meanwhile, residents continued to attend PTA and school board meetings and called on individual school board members without success.

In January 1967 a group picketed the school attended by many Highland Bend students. Local television and newspaper coverage was good. The CAA had been asked to have a speaker talk on local radio about its activities; fifteen minutes before show time picketers appeared to participate in the program.

The school superintendent promised to provide bus service if the picket was called off. Later he indicated that the school system could not afford the 60 cents per mile cost of the bus. The Highland

Bend group coordinated with the CAA and offered to pay for service through June, if free service would be provided the following September. This was agreed to, and the residents raised and turned over $150 to the school superintendent.

The superintendent then said that the school bus contractor refused to send a bus to Highland Bend because the bridge was too narrow. The CAA requested a state survey to determine whether Highland Bend needed bus service. The survey indicated the need and recommended that the school board own and operate its own bus service and include Highland Bend in the route. The following summer the school board started operating its own service.

To float a bond issue, 55 percent of the voters must favor it. The bond issue for school operating costs lost by 16 votes. The CAA and its resident groups had worked neither for nor against its passage.

The CAA director pointed out to the superintendent that all but 3 of the 60 people in Highland Bend who had voted had opposed the bond issue. He suggested that if the school would include Highland Bend in the bus service, the CAA would work to get the levy passed when the bill came up again in the fall. By this time, many people in the community were sympathetic to the Highland Bend cause as a result of the publicity it had received. The superintendent agreed that if they worked for the levy they would get school bus service.

The CAA Director scheduled meetings between local educators and poverty residents. In these meetings, the residents learned what the bond money would be spent for and asked that some money be used for vocational education. Politicians and educators who had never been to Highland Bend found themselves wooing votes and making public commitments to the group. The residents gained new insight into their strength. At the election, the deprived areas voted solidly for the bond issue and Highland Bend got its school bus.

Out of this campaign came a permanent independent community organization in Highland Bend. An area resident donated a building and staff, and officers work voluntarily. The group asked the school board to move Adult Basic Education courses out of schools and into communities that need them. During the first year this was done, 15 Highland Bend residents attended class two nights a week in their community center. All 15 finished the course, and the class was presented to the state as an example of what basic education could do. Additional classes have been held in the summers of 1967 and 1968.

Fair Housing Ordinance: Decatur-Macon Opportunities Corporation, Decatur, Illinois

Urban renewal efforts in Decatur until recently had been typical of such efforts nationwide--a property-oriented rather than people-oriented enterprise. Urban renewal in the Greenwood area had meant what it had meant in cities across the county--removal of the poor, both black and white. No provision was made for relocation, and the high-rise apartments that replaced the slums were too expensive for the former low-income residents. Most important, however, the dislocated Negro poor had nowhere to go. He faced a wall of entrenched discrimination in the sale and rental of housing in other neighborhoods.

The Decatur NAACP had asked the City Council in December 1967 to enact a fair housing ordinance to replace the previously issued statement that licensed brokers should not discriminate. In response, the council prepared a weak ordinance without teeth. It failed to define what constituted the sale and rental of housing, leaving loopholes for landlords to claim that tenants were "friends" or "relations." It had no enforcement powers. Most significant, it exempted all housing with five or fewer rental units, thereby exempting almost all rental housing within Decatur that most Negroes could afford.

The council did not publicize the draft ordinance to be acted upon in January. The CAA contacted the NAACP, Council of Churches, neighborhood residents, local university officials, two local neighborhood based organizations previously formed by the CAA, and the League of Women Voters.

Over 200 people attended the City Council meeting to object to the draft ordinance and requestpassage of a strong ordinance comparable to others enacted in the State. Their testimony and joint opposition forced postponement of action on the ordinance. The CAA then organized interested groups to draw up a strong ordinance and develop plans for long-range housing programs. Under CAA leadership, the citizens groups organized themselves in late February 1968 as the Concerned Citizens for a Fair Housing Ordinance, including in its membership the CAA director, a member of the CAA Board, and representatives of the two CAA-sponsored neighborhood-based organizations.

The Concerned Citizens presented a CAA-developed ordinance to City Council in March 1968 which provided for (1) concise definitions of housing rentals and sales; (2) elimination of exemptions to cover all housing regardless of the number of dwelling units; (3) granting conciliatory and mediatory powers for the recently established

Human Relations Commission; and (4) increased fines for non-compliance from $500 to $1,000 and imposition of a 30-day jail term.

City Council rejected the CAA-proposed ordinance, agreeing only to reduce the exemption clause to housing of four dwelling units or less. Council tabled the resolution for a week and asked the CAA to present a position paper documenting its stand.

The Concerned Citizens and its constituent groups organized a massive turn-out at City Council to demand a stronger ordinance. City Council, responding to the public show of support for the CAA position, passed an ordinance meeting several of the CAA provisions.

The new ordinance dropped all exemptions to cover all housing, defined what constituted sale and rental of housing to close loop-holes, and provided for a paid Community Relations Director for the Human Relations Commission. It did not increase fines, impose gain sentences or include specific enforcement powers for the Human Relations Commission. However, it authorized the Commission to revise its own by-laws to provide for enforcement procedures and agreed to appoint a Negro to serve as Community Relations Director.

The Concerned Citizens prepared a slate of recommended candidates for the Human Relations Commission and Director and the Mayor made the recommended appointments. The reconstituted Human Relations Commission, again with CAA prodding, drafted new by-laws in May 1968, including procedures for filing complaints of discrimination under the city's fair housing ordinance.

Meanwhile, the Concerned Citizens has incorporated under CAA tutelage as a private non-profit organization, the Decatur Association for Racial Equality (DARE). It is now becoming an effective independent citizen organization, with the CAA acting in an advisory capacity.

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